



**City of Cincinnati, Ohio**

# **2005-2009 Consolidated Plan**

## **Executive Summary**

**Submission to HUD**

**November 15, 2004**

# **City of Cincinnati, Ohio**

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## **Executive Summary**

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## **CREDITS**

The following individuals and organizations received notification about public hearings, were asked to comment on the preliminary goals, objectives and requested budget, and/or provided comments or assistance in some other way during the planning process. Thank you for your participation!

AIR, Inc.	Greater Cincinnati Chamber of Commerce
Allen Temple Real Estate	Hamilton Co. Regional Planning Commission
AMOS	Hamilton Co Community Develop
Avondale Community Council	Hamilton County JFS
Bethany House	Hartwell Improvement Association
Better Housing League	Harvest Community Development Corporation
Bond Hill Community Council	HOME
Bond Hill Community Urban Redevelopment Corp	Home Ownership Center
Bonnie Neumeier	Housing Advisory Council (HAC)
California Community Council	Huff Realty
Camp Washington Community Business District	Hyde Park Neighborhood Council
Camp Washington Community Council	IMAGO, Inc.
Caracole	Ivonne Mayfield
Carthage Civic League	Jireh Development Corporation
Center for Independent Living Options	Kennedy Heights Community Council
Christina Glynn	LADD
Cincinnati Business Committee	League of Women Voters
Cincinnati Center City Development Corp (3CDC)	Legal Aid Society of Greater Cincinnati
Cincinnati Empowerment Corporation	Lighthouse Youth Services
Cincinnatians for Affordable Housing	Linwood Community Council
Clifton Town Meeting	Local Initiatives Support Corporation
CMHA	Lower Price Hill Community Council
CNBDU	Madisonville Community Council
Coalition for the Homeless	Madisonville CURC
College Hill Forum	Madisonville Weed and Seed
Columbia Tusculum Community Council	MARCC
Comm. Development Adv. Bd.	Miami Purchase Preservation Fund
Community Action Agency	Millvale Residents Community Council
Community Faith Alliance	Mohawk Area Development Corporation
Community Reinvestment Committee	Mt. Adams Civic Association
CUF Community Council	Mt. Airy Town Council
Downtown Cincinnati, Inc.	Mt. Auburn Community Council
Drop Inn Center	Mt. Lookout Civic Club
East Price Hill Improvement Association	Mt. Washington Community Council
East Walnut Hills Assembly	National Affordable Housing Trust
East Westwood Improvement Association	NBHD Investment Partners
English Woods Civic Association	NBHD Reinvestment Corporation
Evanston Community Council	NDC Association
EXCEL	New Prospect Development Corporation
Family Housing Developers	North Avondale Neighborhood Association
Fay Community Council	North Fairmount Community Center
Federal Reserve Bank	North Fairmount Community Council
Free Store Food Bank	Northside Community Council
Genesis Redevelopment Inc.	Oakley Community Council
Goodwill	OTR Chamber of Commerce
Grassroots Leadership Academy	OTR Housing Network

Over the Rhine Foundation  
Over the Rhine Housing Network  
People Working Cooperatively  
Pleasant Ridge Community Council  
PNC Bank  
Preserving Affordable Housing  
Price Hill Civic Club  
Provident Bank  
ReSTOC  
Rina Saperstein  
Riverside Civic and Welfare Club  
Roselawn Community Council  
Salvation Army  
Santa Maria Center  
Sara Sheets  
Sayler Park Village Council  
Sedamsville Civic Association

South Cumminsville Community Council  
Steele Realtors  
Steve Howe  
The Heights Community Council  
The Partnership Center  
UC Office of University Architect  
United Way  
Uptown Consortium  
Urban Appalachian Council  
Walnut Hills Redevelopment Foundation  
Westwood Civic Association  
Winton Place Community Council  
Women's Resource Center  
Working In Neighborhoods  
Xavier University Community Building Institute  
YMCA  
YWCA

The Community Development Advisory Board (CDAB) is:

Alice Skirtz, Chair

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## Introduction

Every five years the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires the recipients of CDBG and HOME funds to prepare a five-year Consolidated Plan that provides the framework for the process that will be used by the City to identify housing, homeless, special populations, and community and economic development needs and resources and to tailor a strategic plan for meeting those needs. The Department of Community Development and Planning and the Finance Department, Division of Budget and Evaluation prepared this Consolidated Plan for 2005-2009 for the City of Cincinnati to improve the quality of life of the city by guiding the use of funds.

Consistent with the intent and purpose of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, this Consolidated Plan seeks to assist in ensuring the continued viability of the City of Cincinnati through programs designed to:

Provide suitable and stable living environments for all citizens by sustaining and improving housing stock, commercial structures, public safety, municipal infrastructure, and public facilities to prevent further disinvestments in and deterioration of the City's neighborhoods;

Maintain and increase the City's population and tax base by expanding economic opportunities for low- and moderate-income citizens to support the ongoing provision of vital city services that are essential to the quality of life in the City and its neighborhoods; and,

Develop the City's diverse human capital by providing health, social, and other support services to recognize and support citizen contribution to the City's vitality.

### **The Five-Year Plan of the City of Cincinnati**

The Consolidated Plan has three components: *Volume One* - an existing conditions analysis used to help determine the needs of the community; *Volume Two* - a five year plan consisting of the goals and objectives that will guide our investment between 2005 and 2009; and *Volume Three* - a one year action plan that includes details about specific programs that will be funded in 2005.

### **The Planning Process**

The goal of the City of Cincinnati Consolidated Plan is to document community needs and determine how to best address those needs. To do so, City staff gathered information from existing neighborhood plans, the U.S. Census Bureau and HUD CHAS data; hosted meetings for the Community Development Advisory Board (CDAB) and other stakeholder groups; held public hearings; and incorporated information from other public processes such as the Community Priority Request Process, Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing study, and the Housing Advisory Council. Staff then developed measurements to benchmark progress.

City staff compiled a preliminary Needs Analysis based on 1980, 1990, and 2000 U.S. Census Data to document demographic trends and target neighborhoods that would most benefit from City assistance.

A preliminary list of goals and objectives, as well as a draft of the Requested Consolidated Plan Budget, was sent to stakeholders and CDAB members for feedback. Staff hosted focus groups for homelessness, housing and economic development issues. A public hearing of CDAB was held to elicit further public input, and the CDAB's final recommendations reflected community feedback.

The final goals and objectives included in this Consolidated Plan are the result of countless hours of work from the public, CDAB members, and City staff.





## Needs and Strategies

### Housing and Other Community Needs

***Development Vision Statement:*** *Significant improvements to the quality of life in Cincinnati will be made by strategically addressing the specific needs of each neighborhood. By creating a diverse and affordable housing stock, reducing crime and blight, and providing economic development opportunities in neighborhoods, Cincinnati will be a more vibrant, livable city.*

Strategy development for *Housing and Other Community Needs* was derived from an analysis of community needs based on demographic data from the 2000 U.S. Census, neighborhoods plans, the Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing study, the preliminary recommendations of the Housing Advisory Council, the Community Priority Request Process, Cincinnati Neighborhood Business Districts United (CNBDU), and other studies and processes available and deemed useful.

The demographic data was prepared as a neighborhood-by-neighborhood analysis of U.S. Census data from years 1980, 1990 and 2000. It showed population, housing, income, workforce, and education trends in individual neighborhoods as well as the City as a whole. (For complete neighborhood and Citywide data, please see Volume I: Community Profile.)

Also, for the first time, neighborhood plans were used as a resource for development of the goals and objectives in the *Housing and Other Community Needs* section. These plans provided excellent information about individual neighborhood needs and challenges and can be used to help guide future investment. To use the plans in this process shows that the City is committed to help the neighborhoods realize their vision.

### Housing Needs

When determining the housing strategy for the City of Cincinnati, the U.S. Census data and analysis of neighborhood plans as detailed above was used first and foremost as an indication of the housing needs of the community.

Those that stood out as the most important were the needs to:

- Increase market rate and affordable homeownership
- Improve affordable rental housing options for residents with low and very low incomes

### **Homeownership**

Although the City's rate of homeownership has risen slightly in past decades, it is still very low in comparison to other large cities in the State of Ohio and comparable cities throughout the region.

Cincinnati has been, historically, a city of low homeownership with higher percentages of renters, many of them occupying the dozens of four-unit apartment buildings that still exist throughout the city. However, the city's desire to increase the tax base, in part, through increased population, and particularly the population of families, requires a greater emphasis on the importance of homeownership.

Although increased homeownership has been an unspoken goal, it has only been specifically acknowledged as a primary housing objective in recent years. This priority goes beyond providing opportunities

for homeownership, but also acknowledges the importance of maintenance of those homeownership units. The theory is that increased homeownership and housing maintenance opportunities in both market rate and affordable ranges will help stabilize communities by increasing residents' feelings of responsibility for their neighborhood, thus decreasing incidences of crime, blighted and vacant properties, and disorder, and increasing the perception of safety, property values, and excessive transience.

Additionally, for an average person, a home is often the largest and best investment one can make. Oftentimes the financial impact of homeownership seems daunting, but can be very financially rewarding in the long-run, given a strong credit history, sufficient income, and true understanding of the responsibilities of homeownership. Homebuyer counseling is recommended for anyone proposing homeownership.

### **Rental Housing**

Homeownership, however, is not a viable option for everyone, particularly residents with very low incomes. Oftentimes renters are led to believe that a person of any income is eligible for homeownership, and low-interest loans for downpayments and advertised opportunities for no-closing cost deals reinforce this notion. However, although it may be relatively easy to buy a house, many former renters soon learn that it takes much greater effort, and a much higher cash flow, to own and maintain a house. For this reason, some low-income homeowners can find themselves in a situation where their property falls into disrepair, or they must default on their loan or declare personal bankruptcy. This situation is negative for both the individual and the community.

If low-income persons and families are seeking homeownership opportunities to maintain or improve the quality of their lives, the key may not, indeed, be homeownership, but a better rental situation. For this reason, high-quality affordable rental housing is an absolute necessity. If the City is encouraging low-income persons to enter into homeownership in order to build more stable communities with higher levels of resident responsibility, it may be necessary to reevaluate the desired outcomes. Community stability and growth can also be achieved by providing a sufficient stock of affordable rental housing that is clean, safe, modern, and accessible to employment, recreation, and services.

### Priority Housing Needs

According to the CHAS (Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy) data published by HUD, Cincinnati has approximately 33,000 housing units that are either a cost burden to their residents, have physical problems, or are overcrowded. A unit poses a cost burden to the inhabitant when the gross rent (including utilities) is greater than 30 percent of the household income. Physical problems are categorized as units without a complete kitchen or plumbing facilities and overcrowding is defined as 1.01 or more persons per room.

HUD Table 2A: PRIORITY HOUSING NEEDS (households)		Priority Need Level High, Medium, Low		Unmet Need	Goals
Renter	Small Related	0-30%	H	6,683	72
		31-50%	M	2,375	25
		51-80%	M	977	11
	Large Related	0-30%	M	1,600	18
		31-50%	L	858	9
		51-80%	L	490	5
	Elderly	0-30%	H	4,111	44
		31-50%	M	1,427	16
		51-80%	L	527	6
	All Other	0-30%	H	9,033	98
		31-50%	H	3,901	42
		51-80%	M	1,333	15
Owner		0-30%	H	3,680	524
		31-50%	H	2,859	409
		51-80%	H	3,774	532
Special Needs		0-80%		NA	NA
Total Goals					1,826

In Cincinnati there are currently a total of 90,380 rental units and 57,715 owner occupied units. Priority housing needs were established for low-income rental and owner-occupied units by finding the percent of total units that the unmet need comprises. The Priority Need Level was determined as high for an unmet need that was >4% of the total number of rental or owner-occupied units. High priority was placed on all renting groups with housing problems that are living below 30% of area medium income (AMI). High priority was also given to all homeowners with housing problems living below 80% of AMI. A Medium Need Level was given to groups with an unmet need between 1%-4%. These groups include small sized family renters with housing problems living between 31% and 80% of AMI as well as elderly renters living between 31%-50% AMI. A Low Priority Level was assigned to unmet needs of less than 1%. Low priority was given to elderly renters living between 51%-80% of AMI and large-sized family renters living between 31%-80% AMI.

The Goals were determined by multiplying the group's corresponding percentage with the five-year targets for rental and homeownership that are outlined in the Action Plan. The five-year goal for new rental units is 984 and there is a five-year goal of 8,190 new homeownership units. The goal is to provide 1,826 low income units with decent, safe, and sanitary units. This goal does not reflect the number of low-income individuals receiving other forms of assistance such as counseling services, mortgage assistance, or emergency repair services.

### **Other Community Needs**

HUD uses the category of *Other Community Needs* to refer to any problems to be addressed with federal dollars that are not related to homelessness, special populations, or directly related to housing. Using the U.S. Census Data and review of neighborhood plans as the indication of other community needs.

Those identified as of primary importance were the needs to:

- Promote economic development, particularly small business and industrial development
- Increase the skills of the workforce and access to jobs
- Provide human services and assist those that are in need of upgraded facilities.
- Serve youth

### **Economic Development**

The City is in constant competition with its suburbs, which can offer a plentiful supply of undeveloped land and cheaper office and retail space. Industrial and commercial development is easier at the region's periphery than at its core. The City has to contend with state policies that subsidize the cost of moving jobs to new development sites in the suburbs. Suburban developments are typically greenfield developments. In contrast, even after the City has acquired sites, in and of itself no small accomplishment, it then often faces the challenge of promoting development on brownfields, with the attendant costs of rebuilding aging infrastructure, demolition, and dealing with environmental hazards.

Some issues the City faces in redevelopment include:

- The City is short of large sites that can be developed.
- Environmentally damaged land is a serious problem.
- Inadequate infrastructure in industrial areas can play a key role for companies that are considering expansion, often leading them to consider relocation instead.
- Older built-out urban cities such as Cincinnati have little vacant land available for development.
- Land assembly is often something private developers need assistance with.
- The physical impact of blight on a small neighborhood commercial district is evident much sooner than in large commercial or industrial areas.
- Potential small business developers in the central city face barriers involving the lack of assistance, lack of financing and discrimination.

### **Workforce Development and Access to Jobs**

The City's potential workforce includes a disproportionate share of the region's less well-off members. The City's resident workforce is less educated than the suburban workforce and is qualified for less skilled jobs. The poverty rate in the City of Cincinnati is 21.5% percent.

The City and Hamilton County have executed an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) to pool Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and other Department of Labor grant programs into a integrated system with policy direction provided by the Southwest Ohio Region Workforce Investment Board. This integrated system and limited WIA resources will be enhanced by strategic CDBG-funded programs that focus on hard to serve low and moderate income City residents.

### **Human Services and Public Facilities**

Not-for-profit organizations that serve the human service needs of the population of the City sometimes have infrastructure needs that imperil their ability to provide service. These may include lead hazards.

### **Youth**

Cincinnati's youth are concentrated in its poorest neighborhoods. The City collaborates with the Citizen's Committee on Youth (CCY) to provide counseling and mentoring services for youth in low-income neighborhoods, and provides year-round employment opportunities for in-school youth. CCY also provides summertime enrichment activities to youth at various sites throughout the City.

### **Other Community Development Needs**

There are two additional public processes that help the City of Cincinnati make community development funding decisions. One is focused towards the Neighborhood Business Districts (NBDs) and the other towards the community as a whole. Both were reviewed to help verify the community development needs of the City of Cincinnati.

HUD Table 2B: PRIORITY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT NEEDS	Priority Need Level	Unmet	Dollars to Address	
	High, Medium, Low, No Such Need	Priority Need	Unmet	Goals
			Priority Need	
<b>PUBLIC FACILITY NEEDS</b> (projects)				
Senior Centers	NA	NA	NA	NA
Handicapped Centers	NA	NA	NA	NA
Homeless Facilities	H	75	3,132,855	75
Youth Centers	NA	NA	NA	NA
Child Care Centers	NA	NA	NA	NA
Health Facilities	NA	NA	NA	NA
Neighborhood Facilities	L	6	2,225,000	-
Parks and/or Recreation Facilities	L	12	4,965,000	1
Parking Facilities	L	6	6,000,000	-
Non-Residential Historic Preservation	NA	NA	NA	NA
Other Public Facility Needs	NA	NA	NA	NA
<b>INFRASTRUCTURE</b> (projects)				
Water/Sewer/ Flood Improvements	H	4	1,500,000	4
Street/Sidewalk Improvements	M	27	45,618,000	12
Solid Waste Disposal Improvements	NA	NA	NA	NA
Other Infrastructure Needs	M	3	165,000	2
<b>PUBLIC SERVICE NEEDS</b> (people)				
Senior Services	NA	NA	NA	NA
Handicapped Services	NA	NA	NA	NA
Youth Services	H	1,460	4,143,660	1,460
Child Care Services	NA	NA	NA	NA
Transportation Services	NA	NA	NA	NA
Substance Abuse Services	NA	NA	NA	NA
Employment Training	H	1,430	103,289,000	1,430
Health Services	NA	NA	NA	NA
Lead Hazard Screening	H	1,125		
Crime Awareness	H	38,000	500,000	38,000
Other Public Service Needs	H	7,685	4,900,000	7,685
<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>				
ED Assistance to For-Profits(businesses)	H	500	4,475,000	500
ED Technical Assistance(businesses)	H	165	3,050,000	165
Micro-Enterprise Assistance(businesses)	H	2,460	2,300,000	2,460
Rehab; Publicly- or Privately-Owned	H	16	3,500,000	16
Commercial/Industrial (projects)				
C/I* Infrastructure Development (projects)	see above			
Other C/I* Improvements(projects)	see above			
<b>PLANNING</b>				
Planning	L	23	1,150,000	1
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED DOLLARS NEEDED:</b>			190,913,515	

The Priority Community Development Needs (Table 2B) were established by using approved Community Plans and past Community Priority Requests (CPRs) submitted by community councils to the City that outline development priorities. The ‘Unmet Priority Need’ is equivalent to the total number of requests that have not yet been fulfilled. The total number of development needs expected to be fulfilled during the cycle of this Consolidated Plan is listed in the “Goals” category. There are some public facilities, infrastructure, and services have not traditionally been provided by the City of Cincinnati, and therefore the City does not have a means for determining the need. In these cases, Table 2B lists them as “not applicable” (N/A).





## The Strategy

**Overall Development Goal:** Develop and support comprehensive efforts to revitalize neighborhoods while expanding economic opportunities and reducing blight. Development and support should strategically target 1) parts of the community that demonstrate the best chance for significant change, and 2) neighborhoods that have experienced an increase in the number of persons in poverty and vacant housing units and a decrease in the number of families and owner-occupied housing units.

### The Strategic Approach to City-wide Neighborhood Revitalization

As previously mentioned, SNAs are LMI eligible when 51% or more of the population has an annual income of 80% or less than the area median income. There are currently seven SNAs that are not LMI eligible but have at least 45% of their population with an annual income of 80% or less than the area median income. These neighborhoods may, during the cycle of this Consolidated Plan, become LMI eligible. These neighborhoods, while not eligible for CDBG funds as an entire neighborhood, may contain census tracts that are eligible or have individuals eligible for assistance.

There are also five SNAs, that are currently LMI-eligible, which have no more than 60% of their population with an annual income of 80% or less than the area median household income. As 63% is the City's average, these neighborhoods have the possibility of returning to non-eligible status during this Consolidated Plan cycle.

Each of these neighborhoods is at a critical point. By strategically directly funding and support to these 12 neighborhoods, or *Strategic Investment Areas*, there is an opportunity to influence major improvements to housing, business development and quality of life with relatively less cost and effort than if conditions were to worsen. This additional support can be directed to these neighborhoods by spending CDBG dollars for housing and community development improvements in eligible census tracts<sup>4</sup> and through other targeted means such as the establishment of NRSAs. Additionally, the City can support the Strategic Investment Areas by directing non-CDBG dollars to the areas through execution of capital projects such as streetscape improvements; implementation of key recommendations from approved plans; transportation improvements; technical assistance for CDCs and other community capacity building activities; and other projects or programs that work to improve housing opportunities and conditions, the business environment and quality of life in these neighborhoods.

This is not to say that those neighborhoods currently most in need would not continue to receive funding. Because CDBG funds may be spent only in eligible census tracts, the bulk of the City of Cincinnati's CDBG and HOME dollars will continue to be spent in the areas with the greatest need – mostly neighborhoods where this money has been spent in past years. While some additional assistance would be provided to the Strategic Investment Area neighborhoods in the short term, it is the theory that once these neighborhoods stabilize, that would allow more funding and attention to be given to those neighborhoods most in need.

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<sup>4</sup> About 7 of the 12 neighborhoods currently contain eligible census tracts.

**Strategic Investment Areas**

*Neighborhoods that may become LMI-eligible:*

Clifton  
College Hill  
E. Walnut Hills  
Hartwell  
Kennedy Heights  
Mt. Washington  
Sayler Park

*Neighborhoods that may return to non-eligible:*

Evanston/East Walnut Hills  
Mt. Airy  
Riverside/Sayler Park  
West Price Hill  
Westwood

*LMI-eligible Neighborhoods:*

Avondale	Fay Apartments	Roselawn
Bond Hill	Linwood	Sedamsville/Riverside
Camp Washington	Lower Price Hill	South Cumminsville/Millvale
Carthage	Madisonville	South Fairmount
CBD-Riverfront	Mt. Airy	University Heights
Corryville	Mt. Auburn	Walnut Hills
East End	North Fairmount/English	West End
East Price Hill	Woods	West Price Hill
Evanston	Northside	Westwood
Evanston/East Walnut Hills	Over-the-Rhine	Winton Hills
Fairview/Clifton Heights	Riverside/Sayler Park	Winton Place

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## **The Housing Goals and Objectives**

There are two housing goals and five corresponding objectives. The main focus of the strategy for housing revitalization is two-fold:

1. *Physical Development* - development of and continuous improvements to housing units, for both ownership and rental
2. *Support Services* - support to moderate, low and very low-income persons in finding and maintaining quality affordable housing

### **Housing Goal 1: Develop and maintain new and rehabilitated homeownership and rental units for a variety of income levels.**

*Activities in support of this goal may include but are not limited to: homeownership, rental and mixed housing development and redevelopment; home repair grants; mixed-income, moderate and low and very low-income housing development; infrastructure improvements; housing maintenance services; tax/permit fee assistance; technical assistance and support for Community Development Corporations (CDCs) developing housing; mixed-use commercial/office/residential development; and project market studies.*

**Housing Objective 1:** Promote sustained and increased homeownership through new construction and renovation of housing units. New and renovated units should be focused in neighborhoods with homeownership rates at or below the City's average homeownership rate where the existing inventory of housing stock and/or available land supports development and/or redevelopment for homeownership units.

**Housing Objective 2:** Develop rental units for persons of low and very low-incomes in a manner that is consistent with City policy. Redevelopment should be focused in neighborhoods with significant residential populations, those that previously had significant residential populations but have experienced an increase in vacant units, or those within neighborhood business districts to create stronger mixed-use districts. Rental units are encouraged to be developed in conjunction with new homeownership units to create sustainable mixed-income communities.

### **Housing Goal 2: Provide supportive services to help moderate, low and very low-income persons find and maintain high-quality rental and homeownership units.**

*Activities in support of this goal may include but are not limited to: fair housing services; legal assistance; housing counseling; code related relocation assistance; assistance in making the transition to homeownership; down payment assistance; home maintenance training programs.*

**Housing Objective 3:** Assist low and moderate-income renters make the transition to homeownership and successfully retain ownership of their homes. Services should be focused in neighborhoods that have seen more dramatic decreases in owner-occupied units or have housing stock most appropriate for first-time homeowners.

**Housing Objective 4:** Provide assistance to low and very low-income persons in finding and retaining high-quality affordable rental units.

**Housing Objective 5:** Promote fair housing.

Following is a list of the housing objectives that the City should adopt (performance indicators are shown in parentheses).

<b>HUD Table 2C: Housing Objectives</b>	
<b>Objective</b>	<b>5 Year Target</b>
Promote sustained and increased homeownership through new construction and renovation of housing units. (Homeownership Units)	8,190
Develop rental units for persons of low and very low -incomes in a manner that is consistent with City policy. (Rental Units)	984
Assist low and moderate-income renters make the transition to homeownership and successfully retain ownership of their homes. (Households)	100
Provide assistance to low and very low -income persons in finding and retaining high-quality affordable rental units. (Housing Units)	24,550
Promote fair housing (Households)	7,000

### **Other Community Needs Goals and Objectives**

There are two economic development goals and one quality of life goal with a total of eight corresponding objectives. The main focus of the strategy for other community needs revitalization is three-fold:

1. *Physical Development* - development and revitalization to businesses, business districts and industrial areas
2. *Support Services* - support to businesses and job training
3. *Elimination of Blight* - promotion of sustainable neighborhoods

#### **Economic Development Goal 1: Promote commercial and industrial development and redevelopment.**

*Activities in support of this goal may include but are not limited to: revitalization of neighborhood business districts (NBDs); office and retail development; land assembly; physical and technological infrastructure and site improvements; streetscape improvements; façade improvement programs; enterprise zone agreements; brownfields redevelopment; mixed-use development; and project market studies.*

**Economic Development Objective 1:** Support the development of new and expanded retail and office uses through funding assistance and public improvements. Support should be targeted to redevelopment of existing commercial areas, focusing on designated NBDs and prioritizing those within designated Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Areas (NRSAs). Where necessary, NBDs should be stabilized by reduction in NBD size through housing development in peripheral areas and/or on upper floors of commercial buildings.

**Economic Development Objective 2:** Encourage the development of new and expanded low-intensity industrial uses and the remediation and redevelopment of vacant and underutilized industrial property into light-industrial or commercial uses. Support in the form of funding assistance and public improvements should be targeted to the designated Strategic Program for Urban Redevelopment (SPUR) districts, prioritizing the traditional industrial corridors in the Mill Creek valley.

#### **Economic Development Goal 2: Improve the economic conditions of people and organizations in order to promote business development and employment opportunities.**

*Activities in support of this goal may include but are not limited to: economic education; banking services; credit counseling; technical assistance to small business and micro-enterprises; small business loans; job training and placement for adults and youth; job transportation services; supportive employment services; technical assistance and support for CDCs assisting NBDs.*

**Economic Development Objective 3:** Support economic education and financial services for residents and businesses and capacity building for Community Development Corporations (CDCs) to increase the number of financially secure residents; successful, sustainable businesses; and stable commercial districts in Cincinnati. Services should focus on development of CDCs, small businesses and micro-enterprises in neighborhoods with increasing levels of poverty despite increasing educational and/or income levels.

**Economic Development Objective 4:** Provide support for job-training and placement services and other employment opportunities for adults and adolescents. Services should target neighborhoods with rising levels of poverty and/or unemployment despite increasing educational and/or income levels.

**Quality of Life Goal: Promote sustainable neighborhoods through elimination of blighting influences and improved health and safety.**

*Activities in support of this goal may include but are not limited to: code enforcement; mitigation of vacant and abandoned properties and buildings; environmental remediation; crime reduction; lead reduction activities; development of parks and greenspace; health services; receivership activities; public service facilities improvements; preservation and renovation of historic properties; and youth services and activities.*

**Quality of Life Objective 1:** Support the mitigation and/or removal of blighting influences such as non-code compliant buildings and properties; vacant and abandoned buildings and properties; abandoned automobiles; and environmental contamination, including underground storage tanks and lead hazards. Support positive methods of combating blight through development of parks and greenspace, and preservation and renovation of historic properties. Efforts should focus on primarily residential neighborhoods and designated NBDs, prioritizing those areas designated as NRSAs.

**Quality of Life Objective 2:** Support youth services and activities and health services. Services should focus on primarily residential neighborhoods and designated NBDs, prioritizing those areas designated as NRSAs.

**Quality of Life Objective 3:** Support and encourage public facilities improvements. Improvements should focus on primarily residential neighborhoods and designated NBDs, prioritizing those areas designated as NRSAs.

**Quality of Life Objective 4:** Provide assistance to people and community groups aggressively working to improve the safety and perception of safety in their neighborhoods through Block Watch, Citizens on Patrol, Community Problem Oriented Policing (CPOP), and other crime reduction activities. Services should focus on primarily residential neighborhoods and designated NBDs, prioritizing those areas designated as NRSAs.

<b>HUD Table 2C: Other Community Objectives</b>	
<b>Objective</b>	<b>5 Year Targets</b>
Support the development of new and expanded retail and office uses through funding assistance and public improvements. (Businesses)	500
Encourage the development of new and expanded low-intensity industrial uses and the remediation and redevelopment of vacant and underutilized industrial property into light-industrial or commercial uses. (Businesses)	16
Support economic education and financial services for residents and businesses to increase the number of financially secure residents and successful, sustainable businesses in Cincinnati. (Persons)	7,685
Support economic education and financial services for residents and businesses to increase the number of financially secure residents and successful, sustainable businesses in Cincinnati. (Businesses)	2,630
Provide support for job-training and placement services and other employment opportunities for adults and adolescents. (Persons)	2000
Support the mitigation and/or removal of blighting influences such as non-code compliant buildings and properties; vacant and abandoned buildings and properties; abandoned automobiles; and environmental contamination, including underground storage tanks a	5,250
Support the mitigation and/or removal of blighting influences such as non-code compliant buildings and properties; vacant and abandoned buildings and properties; abandoned automobiles; and environmental contamination, including underground storage tanks a	1
Support the mitigation and/or removal of blighting influences such as non-code compliant buildings and properties; vacant and abandoned buildings and properties; abandoned automobiles; and environmental contamination, including underground storage tanks a	6,275
Support youth services and activities and health services. (Persons)	2,300
Support and encourage public facilities improvements. (Facilities)	40
Provide assistance to people and community groups aggressively working to improve the safety and perception of safety in their neighborhoods. (Persons)	38,300



**Table 2C: Summary of Specific Housing/Community Development Objectives  
(Table 2A/2B Continuation Sheet)**

Objective #	Specific Objectives	Performance Measure	Expected	Actual
<b>Housing Objectives</b>				
<b>Rental Housing Objectives</b>				
H2	Develop rental units for persons of low and very low -incomes in a manner that is consistent with City policy.	Rental Units	984	
H4	Provide assistance to low and very low -income persons in finding and retaining high-quality affordable rental units.	Persons	24,550	
H5	Promote fair housing.	Persons	3,500	
<b>Owner Housing Objectives</b>				
H1	Promote sustained and increased homeownership through new construction and renovation of housing units.	Housing Units	8,190	
H3	Assist low and moderate-income renters make the transition to homeownership and successfully retain ownership of their homes.	Households	100	
H5	Promote fair housing	Persons	3,500	
<b>Community Development Objectives</b>				
<b>Infrastructure Objectives</b>				
QL1	Support the mitigation and/or removal of blighting influences such as non-code compliant buildings and properties; vacant and abandoned buildings and properties; abandoned automobiles; and environmental contamination, including underground storage tanks a	Facilities	1	
QL1	Support the mitigation and/or removal of blighting influences such as non-code compliant buildings and properties; vacant and abandoned buildings and properties; abandoned automobiles; and environmental contamination, including underground storage tanks a	Housing Units	6,275	
<b>Public Facilities Objectives</b>				
QL3	Support and encourage public facilities improvements.	Facilities	40	
<b>Public Services Objectives</b>				
QL1	Support the mitigation and/or removal of blighting influences such as non-code compliant buildings and properties; vacant and abandoned buildings and properties; abandoned automobiles; and environmental contamination, including underground storage tanks a	Persons	5,250	
QL4	Provide assistance to people and community groups aggressively working to improve the safety and perception of safety in their neighborhoods.	Persons	38,300	
ED3	Support economic education and financial services for residents and businesses to increase the number of financially secure residents and successful, sustainable businesses in Cincinnati.	Persons	7,685	
ED4	Provide support for job-training and placement services and other employment opportunities for adults and adolescents.	Persons	2,000	
<b>Economic Development Objectives</b>				
ED1	Support the development of new and expanded retail and office uses through funding assistance and public improvements.	Businesses	500	
ED2	Encourage the development of new and expanded low -intensity industrial uses and the remediation and redevelopment of vacant and underutilized industrial property into light-industrial or commercial uses.	Businesses	16	
ED3	Support economic education and financial services for residents and businesses to increase the number of financially secure residents and successful, sustainable businesses in Cincinnati.	Businesses	2,630	
<b>Other Objectives</b>				
QL2	Support youth services and activities and health services.	Persons	2,300	

## Needs and Strategies

### Homelessness and Special Populations

#### **Introduction**

The Homeless Section of the 2005 Consolidated Plan has been developed for both the City of Cincinnati and Hamilton County, Ohio as part of the Continuum of Care for the Homeless (CoC) program of the combined jurisdictions. Pursuant to HUD's guidance and the communities method of conducting planning and facilitating processes for homeless, the jurisdictions have standardized elements contained in the Consolidated Plan and the Continuum of Care Plan housing and services, thereby linking the two documents, reducing duplication of effort and mainstreaming resources. Both the Housing Inventory Chart and the Housing Gaps Analysis are consistent with the CoC annual submission of Exhibit One to HUD. Accountability for the goals/objectives will be part of the annual CoC process and the results will be documented not only in Consolidated Plan Updates and CAPER's but also in Exhibit One of the CoC grant. In addition this document provides the goals/objectives for both the chronically homeless and all the jurisdictions homeless, thereby formalizing the jurisdiction's plan to address "ending" chronic homelessness for the jurisdiction as required by HUD and the Interagency Council on the Homeless.

The CoC planning process is a coordinated, collaborative effort by the City of Cincinnati, Hamilton County, the Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless, and the CoC Working Groups and is facilitated by The Partnership Center, Ltd. (PCL). The leadership team, now known as the Homeless Clearinghouse, includes staff and members of the City of Cincinnati Department of Community Development, Hamilton County Community Development Department, the Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless (GCCH), an elected representative liaison from each of the Working Groups, and PCL. Together, the staff of these organizations and government agencies provided year-round coordination, planning, program development efforts, funding, program/housing support, and technical assistance. The purpose of the Clearinghouse is to:

1. Plan and coordinate community influence on systemic decisions affecting the homeless.
2. Uphold the elements of the Consolidated Plans that affect homelessness.
3. Identify and support the utilization of all sources of funds and other resources used to improve the quality of life for homeless persons and/or to end homelessness.

Community input into the creation and formalization of the Homeless Clearinghouse has enabled identification and recognition of the Homeless Clearinghouse's role as a central point of contact for all CoC issues and planning.

Planning itself occurs through the inclusive CoC process, facilitated by PCL. The Working Groups of the CoC are groups focused on specific populations of homeless persons and/or specific types of providers. CoC Working Groups meet on a regular basis to address service-related issues. The Working Groups include not only the appropriate service/housing providers but also homeless persons, including those from the subpopulations identified in the committee's action plan, and system organizations that have an effect/influence over the target issue (e.g. welfare department, substance abuse board, social security, etc.) The groups often report to the community at large, and now quarterly to the Homeless Clearinghouse. This system has provided the community with a new and improved level of coordination, and the ability to assure efforts in the community are not duplicated. It also allows all the parties to recognize and

support the appropriate roles of each other from funders to advocates and planners to implementers. The Working Groups, their focus, and their prime activities are:

Working Group	Focus Area	Prime Activities
Family Shelter Partnership Program (FSPP)	Families in shelter	Coordinating quality case management
		Coordinating mainstream resources (TANF, FS, CHIP, Medicaid, Child Care, Children's Protective)
Homeless Individuals Task Force (HIT Force)	Homeless single individuals and chronically homeless	Coordinating resources for single individuals
		Improving access to mainstream services (MH/SA)
Homeless Outreach Group (HOG)	Street Homeless and chronically homeless	Implementing a Chronic Homeless Initiative (HIP)
		Coordinating outreach efforts
HMIS Advisory Committee	HMIS Quality and Integrity	Increasing access to housing/services directly from the streets
		Implementing HMIS
Permanent Housing Group	SHP Permanent Housing for the Disabled	Policy/Procedure Development & Oversight
		Promoting best practice efforts.

To ensure there are not duplicate efforts in coordination and planning, the City of Cincinnati contracted on a year-round basis for PCL to manage both the Continuum and all other funding and administrative support for homeless services (including SPC, ESG and HOPWA), and the homeless section of the Consolidated Plan. Additionally, in a discussion/clarification process, the roles of the CoC and the Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless have been clarified. The following is the identified role of the CoC in the community:

#### *Planning/Coordination*

- Maintain an “inclusive planning process”
- Facilitate Consolidated Planning and monitoring process (homeless section) for the City/County
- Facilitate processes to include the voice of homeless persons in planning
- Maintain and staff the community planning/coordination body: *Homeless Clearinghouse*.

#### *Data Gathering/Sharing*

- Coordinate the “homeless count(s)” as required by HUD or other community initiatives
- Provide data to local/state/federal governments and community providers to use
- Provide the linkage for HMIS data with counts, government reporting, etc.
- Maintain and staff the *HMIS Advisory Committee*

#### *Funding Coordination and Development*

- Facilitate annual CoC process and coordinate grant submission to HUD
- Facilitate annual City-ESG process and coordinate grant requirements with the City
- Monitor funding, as required by funding source(s)
- Providing ongoing technical assistance to funded agencies serving the homeless.
- Coordinate activities to support/develop community funding initiatives with HUD and other federal, state, local resources

### *Quality Improvement*

- Facilitate training programs to improve quality (e.g. *Front Line Worker Training*)
- Serve on the Ohio Policy Academy Team linking C/H CoC to Ohio efforts
- Provide technical assistance in program design
- Facilitate efforts to improve quality within the homeless delivery system

### *Service Delivery System Intervention*

- Facilitate/support initiatives that improve access to mainstream resources/services for the homeless
- Provide support for the creation of partnership initiatives/programs
- Provide support/coordination for partnership groups including: *FSPP, HIT, HOG, PHG*, etc. whose focus is:
  - Provision of direct service for a specific population of homeless persons
  - Network information
  - Information sharing among providers
  - Gaps identification (directed to CoC planning and/or GCCH advocacy)

## **Homeless Strategy**

The Homeless Strategy was developed through a Working Group process and an inclusive, system. The Homeless Clearinghouse formed a special Consolidated Plan Working Group comprised of 12 persons representing each of the CoC Working Groups, the City, the County, the Coalition and PCL. The working group, facilitated by an independent organizational consultant, Evan Gay, Ph.D., worked through development of the goals, objectives and measures for the Homeless Strategy. A large-group was convened where 30 persons representing 20 different organizations validated and established methods of measurement for each objective.

**Vision Statement:** The City of Cincinnati/Hamilton County Continuum of Care will continue to develop and implement a single, coordinated, inclusive homeless assistance system, which supports all homeless persons<sup>1</sup> in their movement from homelessness to economic stability and affordable permanent housing within a supportive community.

**Overall Development Goal:** Develop and support inclusive, comprehensive efforts to provide appropriate housing and supportive services to end homelessness.

**Funding Sources:** The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development provides the Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG); Continuum of Care (CoC) grant sources, such as the Supportive Housing Program (SHP), Shelter Plus Care (SPC), and Section 8-SRO Moderate Rehabilitation for the Homeless; HOME; and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). Funding is also provided by other state, local and private resources.

Homeless Goals were established to address four focus areas the community believed were required to complete a full and comprehensive homeless strategy. The four areas include: accurate identification of the need or scope of the problem, supporting and ensuring quality within the housing and service provision system, establishing housing and services in sufficient quantity to address the needs, and ensuring accessibility an/or a paradigm shift in systems to address the needs of homeless persons. Specifically the goals were articulated as follows:

**Goal 1:** *Need* — Ensure that information regarding the numbers, scope, and needs of homeless persons are up to date.

**Goal 2:** *Quantity* – Ensure a sufficient quantity of suitable housing is available to meet the needs of the homeless population in Cincinnati/Hamilton County.

**Goal 3:** *Quality* – Ensure high quality housing and services are available to meet the needs of homeless persons within the Jurisdiction.

**Goal 4:** *Access/Paradigm Shift* - Ensure homeless persons efficiently and effectively obtain any and all mainstream resources and community systems or services that they are eligible for.

## **Homeless Goals and Objectives**

There are four primary goals related to Homelessness and 27 corresponding objectives:

**Homeless Goal 1: *Need*— Ensure that information regarding the numbers, scope, and needs of homeless persons are up to date.**

### *A. Specific to Chronic Homeless*

**Objective 1.A.1:** Establish a baseline to measure change in the number of chronically homeless persons over time.

**Objective 1.A.2:** Determine the number of permanent service-enriched permanent housing units that are required to meet the needs of the CH.

### *B. All Homeless Individuals and Families*

**Objective 1.B.1:** Complete implementation of the HMIS<sup>9</sup> system to provide the basis for timely, accurate documentation of homelessness across the CoC that can be used publicly for educational and research purposes and within organizations to measure unmet needs and program success.

**Objective 1.B.2:** Conduct a regular audit of the validity of the data in the HMIS system.

**Objective 1.B.3:** Determine the number of service-enriched permanent housing units that are required to meet the needs of homeless persons other than the chronically homeless.

**Objective 1.B.4:** Continue the engagement of homeless persons in determination of unmet needs.

**Quality Objective 1.B.5:** Initiate a process to track and document the causes/issues for recidivism.

**Homeless Goal 2: *Quantity*— Ensure a sufficient quantity of suitable housing is available to meet the needs of the homeless population in Cincinnati/Hamilton County.**

### *A. Specific to Chronic Homeless*

**Objective 2.A.1:** Create specialized “niche housing” that attracts previously underserved chronically homeless persons. (Examples of this type of housing could include a damp-house, safe haven, etc. in congregate or apartment style design.)

**Objective 2.A.2:** Create new service-enriched permanent housing units or tenant based rental assistance to meet the needs of the chronically homeless

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<sup>9</sup> HMIS = Homeless Management Information System, a data tracking program funded through the Continuum of Care which tracks basic demographic data on homeless persons and supports aggregate unduplicated count data. Software used by Cincinnati/Hamilton County’s HMIS is VESTA, managed by Caracole, Inc.’s HMIS Project Management Team.

*B. All Homeless Individuals and Families*

**Objective 2.B.1:** Maintain the existing capacity level within the emergency shelter system.

**Objective 2.B.2:** Maintain the existing level of transitional and permanent housing units within the CoC.

**Objective 2.B.3:** Increase the availability of affordable, permanent housing for homeless individuals/families.

**Objective 2.B.4:** Increase the availability of service-enriched transitional/permanent housing options for individuals/families without serious disabilities.<sup>10</sup>

**Objective 2.B.5:** Continue the provision of permanent housing for homeless persons in appropriate, diversified locations, according to individual need.

**Objective 2.B.6:** Assess the need for additional respite shelter beds for persons in families with children.

**Homeless Goal 3: *Quality* – Ensure high quality housing and services are available to meet the needs of homeless persons within the Jurisdiction.**

*A. Specific to Chronic Homeless*

**Objective 3.A.1:** Continue to increase the quality and quantity of case management services.

**Objective 3.A.2:** Create new methods to ensure substance abuse and mental health treatment is sufficiently available to address the needs of the CH.

*B. All Homeless Individuals and Families*

**Objective 3.B.1:** Maintain the requirement that all emergency shelters and transitional housing facilities meet Cincinnati's *Minimum Standards for Shelter* prior to approval for funding.

**Objective 3.B.2:** Continue Front Line Worker Training (FLWT), updating curriculum at least annually based on needs data and expanding offerings to provide training for aides/advocates/house manager level workers.

**Objective 3.B.3:** Support agency use of HMIS data in determination of program effectiveness and for staff evaluations.

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<sup>10</sup> Preference is for scattered site housing. Site-based housing may be considered if a long-term operating strategy is available.

**Objective 3.B.5:** Continue to use the annual “inclusive” CoC process for allocating funding to new and renewing housing and service programs for the homeless.<sup>11</sup>

**Homeless Goal 4: Access/Paradigm Shift - Ensure homeless persons efficiently and effectively obtain any and all mainstream resources and community systems or services that they are eligible for.**

*A. Specific to Chronic Homeless*

**Objective 4.A.1:** Focus on identification and implementation of systems to improve access to housing/services needed by the CH population

*B. All Homeless Individuals and Families*

**Objective 4.B.1:** Focus on identification and implementation of systems to improve access to housing/services needed by the homeless population exclusive of the CH.

**Objective 4.B.2:** Develop a system to improve access into transitional housing.

**Objective 4.B.3:** Develop a system to improve access into Shelter Plus Care.

**Objective 4.B.4:** Implement the Homeless Housing Residential Treatment Program (new ADAS/CoC Substance Abuse Program).

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<sup>11</sup> Funding allocations using this process should include: Emergency Shelter Grant, Section 8 – SRO, Shelter Plus Care, and the Supportive Housing Program, and at a minimum.



## Needs And Strategies

### Special Populations

***Vision Statement:*** *The City will collaborate with a wide variety of public and private organizations in planning and providing housing and service resources to persons with special needs in order that they may live independently.*

### The Needs

HUD recognizes the following special populations. The City of Cincinnati has chosen not to identify priority needs among this set of persons with special needs.

#### The Frail Elderly

In 2000, there were 40,654 persons in Cincinnati (13.2 percent) age 65 or older. Eight percent of these older persons were living in group quarters, 89 percent of which were living in institutions. Of the total number of disabilities tallied in the City of Cincinnati, 29 percent were reported by persons over the age of 65. There were 28,920 householders age 65 or over. More than half (56%) were owners, meaning that elderly residents of Cincinnati are more likely to be homeowners than renters. In 2000, there were 5,596 persons, or approximately 14 percent of the population, over the age of 65 living at or below poverty level. Those over age 65 make up only 8 percent of those living in poverty.

The frail elderly require counseling services to help them make decisions about whether to live independently and how to arrange their finances to help them do so. There has been an increase in predatory lending that makes this service more important than before. Home repairs and assistance in making units accessible can help the frail elderly maintain their independent living status.

#### Persons With Physical Impairments

Most of Cincinnati's housing stock is unsuited for persons with physical disabilities. Independent Living Options (ILO) estimates a need for a total of 29,000 accessible units. Based on 2000 Census, there were 121,824 disabilities reported in the City of Cincinnati. Of these, 10 percent are sensory disabilities, 24 percent are physical disabilities, 16 percent mental disabilities, 8 percent self-care disabilities, 20 percent go-outside-the-home disabilities, and 22 percent employment disabilities. The Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority (CMHA) has a limited supply of handicapped accessible units, used for both elderly and non-elderly households.

Persons with impairments require help making their homes and apartments more accessible. They would also benefit from accessibility improvements in public and non-profit service facilities.

#### Persons with Mental Retardation And Developmental Disabilities

The Hamilton County Board of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (HCBMR/DD) has provided residential services since the late 1970's. Today there are approximately 1,000 individuals with disabilities receiving residential services and supports.

**Persons with HIV/AIDS**

The City is the grantee for a 15 county Eligible Metropolitan Statistical Area (EMSA) that covers parts of three states. The number of deaths due to AIDS has fallen dramatically since 1995. It is estimated that there are as many as 5,000 people with HIV/AIDS in the region. While once a predominantly gay, white male disease, new cases of HIV infection have been more likely to occur among African Americans and Hispanics than among whites. Infection rates among women also continue to increase. Now, many persons with HIV/AIDS are likely to have other disabilities which complicate their situations. These include substance abuse problems and serious mental illness. Three local agencies play major roles in the provision of case management and housing services to persons with HIV/AIDS: AIDS Volunteers of Cincinnati (AVOC), Caracole, Inc. and the Northern Kentucky Independent District Health Department.

The focus of the City's HOPWA Advisory Committee remains on maintaining the existing case management services and the continued use of HOPWA funds to keep people in their homes. HIV/AIDS service providers continue to focus on the growing infection rate in the African American and Hispanic communities and to coordinate more effectively with the substance abuse treatment and mental health providers. The regional HIV/AIDS case management system has been automated to improve management of client information. There remains a need for better housing resources for men in Northern Kentucky. Planning support should be directed at this problem with the idea that programming will be supported in subsequent years if the planning effort is successful.

Support for the existing transitional housing program should be continued and efforts should be made to maintain or increase the number of Shelter Plus Care subsidies for persons with HIV/AIDS.

An additional need that has surfaced is for on going rent subsidies for non-homeless persons with HIV/AIDS. While Shelter Plus Care has been an extremely valuable resource for HIV/AIDS housing, it requires that the client be homeless when entering the program. Recent trends have shown that many clients who are not necessarily homeless have their housing endangered regularly due to budgetary shortfalls each month. The City has proposed a pilot tenant-based rental assistance program with HOPWA funds that would allow income-eligible clients with existing housing to receive on-going rental support rather than emergency short-term assistance. Through this pilot it is hoped that greater overall stability can be maintained for these clients, rather than having them face eviction in order to qualify for housing support.

**Persons with Substance Abuse Problems**

The Hamilton County Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services (ADAS) board is the major funding agency for persons with substance abuse problems. The ADAS board funds agencies with a combined capacity of 445 beds. While these beds do not meet the HUD definition of transitional housing for the homeless, they do represent transitional housing for people who require additional support after crisis treatment and preparing for independent, sober living.

## Special Populations Goals and Objectives: HIV/AIDS

There is one primary goal related to HIV/AIDS and four corresponding objectives.

**HIV/AIDS Goal 1: The City will maintain the existing housing and service programs through the existing network of AIDS services providers and assist them in their continuing efforts to respond to the changing demographics of HIV/AIDS.**

**Objective 1:** Provide operational support for 20 beds of congregate, transitional housing for persons with HIV/AIDS.

*Caracole will continue its direct housing services at both Caracole House, a licensed congregate residence for those who have been disabled or displaced by HIV/AIDS and at Caracole Recovery Community, a transitional housing facility for HIV/AIDS residents who are in substance abuse addiction recovery*

**Objective 2:** Provide direct services for persons with HIV/AIDS, including housing assistance, supportive services and linkages to medical support.

*Case management and services will be provided, with special attention given to clients who are dually diagnosed with an additional disability, such as substance abuse or mental illness. This process is facilitated through AVOC's Case Management Coordinator, who maintains collaborations within the Greater Cincinnati HIV/AIDS Case Management Network, a consortium of HIV/AIDS service providers located throughout the Eligible Metropolitan Statistical Area which includes various substance abuse and mental health agencies.*

*The Shelter Plus Care program will continue to provide subsidies for homeless individuals and families with HIV/AIDS and HOPWA funds will, in part, match the value of those subsidies with outreach services, case management, and supportive services for clients.*

**Objective 3:** Provide long-term tenant-based rental assistance for income-eligible persons with HIV/AIDS.

*Traditionally, housing assistance under HOPWA has been limited to meeting emergency short-term needs for clients. As persons with HIV/AIDS live longer and maintain their health more effectively, many are in need of smaller, ongoing amounts of rental assistance rather than larger, more sporadic assistance payments. This program will assess the longer-term need for this ongoing assistance within the Cincinnati EMSA.*

**Objective 4:** Provide short-term rent, mortgage or utility assistance to persons with HIV/AIDS.

*Funds will be available to individuals and families with HIV/AIDS throughout the Greater Cincinnati EMSA in an effort to assist them in remaining in independent living situations and maintaining their existing housing. In addition, this funding provides for assistance in locating and securing housing when persons with HIV/AIDS are homeless.*

## **The Strategy**

The City's strategy for providing housing and services to the groups of Special Populations varies widely from one to the other. The City is the HUD grantee for HOPWA funds, meaning that the City of Cincinnati has a special responsibility to plan for the needs of the population of persons with HIV/AIDS and to oversee the allocation process. It does this through a representative regional body known as the HOPWA Advisory Committee. In contrast, it is the county that is responsible for programs in the areas of mental illness, mental retardation and substance abuse.

Many of the needs of these special populations touch on issues of homelessness. All services for persons in these special populations that involve emergency shelters, transitional housing or permanent housing have already been addressed in the section on homelessness.

With respect to HIV/AIDS, the City will maintain the existing housing and service programs through the existing network of AIDS services providers and assist them in their continuing efforts to respond to the changing demographics of HIV/AIDS.

With respect to the frail elderly, the City will continue to support direct federal applications for elderly housing, support housing counseling programs that can assist elderly persons in maintaining independent living and protect them from predatory lenders. In addition, the City will continue to fund home repair services and accessibility improvements that can help the elderly live independently.

With respect to persons with disabilities, the City will fund home repair services and accessibility improvements to allow such persons to live independently in units. The City currently provides this service for homeowners, and will consider providing the service to persons in rental units as well, with landlord approval.

With respect to all special populations, the City of Cincinnati will look for opportunities to have a significant impact on the ability of service providers to provide programming. Each year the City will assist a small number of agencies with support for renovation to public facilities that results in structural enhancements or modifications. Agencies to be assisted can include those dedicated to serving special populations and those that serve a wider range of persons but whose facilities are not accessible.

The City will consider using some of its housing dollars in partnership with not-for-profit agencies serving special populations to create additional service-enriched housing units for non-homeless persons.

The City of Cincinnati will look for opportunities to coordinate its funding allocations with Hamilton County in those areas where the county is the grantee for state or federal dollars dedicated to serving persons with mental retardation, development disabilities, serious mental illness or substance abuse problems.

The City would benefit from additional housing units for persons in any of these special populations and will, therefore, support applications for funding from HUD's supportive housing programs for the elderly (Section 202) or persons with disabilities (Section 811).



## **CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN**



## **2005 Citizen Participation Plan**

The Consolidated Plan is a combined planning and submission process for four federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grant programs received by the City:

- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
- HOME Investment Partnership Programs
- Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) Program
- Housing for Persons with AIDs (HOPWA)

The Consolidated Plan is a comprehensive planning approach to address the housing and development needs of the community with an emphasis on strategic planning, citizen participation and coordination among city agencies and community groups. HUD requires every grantee to submit a Consolidated Plan, which estimates community development needs for the ensuing five-year period and an Action Plan, stating annually the intended use of funds for the programs. Cincinnati will submit a complete Consolidated Plan to HUD in 2004 for 2005-2009. Annual Action Plans will be produced for the years 2005-2009, or until Cincinnati submits a new Five-Year Plan.

The 2005-2009 Consolidated Plan is based primarily on 2000 census data, estimates of current needs, projections, and local data sources. The 2005 Consolidated Plan updated the strategies for meeting needs over the next five-year period, and identified resources anticipated to be available for affordable housing needs, neighborhood revitalization needs, economic and job development needs, and needs for public services and facilities.

## **Citizen Participation Mechanisms**

As part of the development of the 2005 Consolidated Plan Action Plan, citizen review and comment on needs, priorities and strategies is sought, as well as participation in the resource allocation process for the annual action plan.

### The Homeless Strategy

The Homeless Section of the 2005-2009 Consolidated Plan will be developed for both the City of Cincinnati and Hamilton County, Ohio as part of the Continuum of Care for the Homeless (CoC) program of the combined jurisdictions. The CoC planning process is a coordinated, collaborative effort by the City of Cincinnati, Hamilton County, the Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless (GCCH), and the CoC Working Groups and is facilitated by the The Partnership Center, Ltd. (PCL).

The leadership team, known as the Homeless Clearinghouse, includes staff and members of: the City of Cincinnati Department of Community Development and Planning, Hamilton County Community Development Department, GCCH, an elected representative liaison from each of the Working Groups, and PCL. The Homeless Clearinghouse formed a special Consolidated Plan Working Group comprised of 12 persons representing each of the CoC Working Groups, the City, the County, the Coalition and PCL. The working group, facilitated by an independent organizational consultant, Evan Gay, Ph.D., worked through development of the goals, objectives and measures for the Homeless Strategy. A large-group was convened where 30 persons representing 20 different organizations validated and established methods of measurement for each objective.



### The Housing Strategy and Other Community Needs Strategy

These two sections will be developed using an analysis of community needs based on demographic data from the 2000 U.S. Census, neighborhoods plans, the Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing study, the preliminary recommendations of the Housing Advisory Council, the Community Priority Request Process, Cincinnati Neighborhood Business Districts United (CNBDU), and other studies and processes available and deemed useful.

Also, for the first time, neighborhood plans will be used as a resource for the goals and objectives. These plans can provide excellent information about neighborhood needs and challenges, and can help guide future investment. Because each one of the 43 active plans is the result of months or even years of work on the part of the neighborhood's residents, property owners, business owners, service organizations, and other stakeholders, they are an accumulation of 15 years worth of citizen participation in its most active form. To use the Plans in this process is to show them, and the countless stakeholders who created them, appropriate respect.

Staff will consult a variety of local stakeholders and stakeholder groups who play a role in housing or economic development in the Cincinnati area. These stakeholders will be consulted early in the process, at the time of goal and objective development, so that their comments can be considered in completion of the Plan. A list of stakeholders and stakeholder group consulted is attached in Part 7 of this section.

### Public Hearing on Proposed 2005 Action Plan/ Consolidated Plan Budget

A public hearing on the proposed 2005 Consolidated Plan budget will be held before the Community Development Advisory Board to receive citizen input on proposed resource allocations for 2005. A notice of the public hearing will appear in a newspaper of general circulation and in the City Bulletin at least 15 days before the hearing. In addition, community organizations will be sent notices by mail.

The public hearing will be held in City Hall, which is an accessible facility. Other accommodations for sight or hearing-impaired persons and for non-English speaking persons will be made upon request. Minutes from this Public Hearing are attached in Part 4 of this section.

Public hearings will also be held by City Council before the 2005-2006 budget is officially approved.

### Publication for 30-day Comment Period

On or about September 15, 2004, the City will publish the Proposed 2005 Action Plan/Consolidated Plan budget for a 30-day comment period. The Proposed Consolidated Plan is made available for citizen review in the Department of Community Development and Planning (805 Central Avenue, Suite 700), in the Office of Budget and Evaluation (City Hall, 801 Plum Street, Cincinnati) and will be mailed out to community stakeholders. Paid advertisements will be run in a widely distributed newspaper and in specialized and neighborhood publications. Notice will be placed on the Citi Cable Bulletin Board, run in the City Bulletin and distributed by fax to all area radio and television media outlets. The 52 community councils and community groups will be mailed notices as well as organizations representing Appalachian and Hispanic issues. A summary of the Proposed 2005-2006 Action Plan/Consolidated Plan budget will be made available to all interested parties who request one by calling the Office of Budget and Evaluation, 352-3232, or by signing up at the public hearing.

In finalizing its 2005 Consolidated Plan budget, the City will consider comments received from citizens at the public hearing or in writing 30 days after the publication of the 2004 Action Plan/Consolidated Plan budget. The City will provide a summary of these views and a summary of the reasons such views or comments are or are not accepted.

Citizen participation is a major component of the Consolidated Planning process, and of the City's overall budget process. In addition to the above public hearing and public comment processes, the City encourages citizen participation in several ways.

#### Community Priority Requests - Neighborhoods

For neighborhood needs, the City asks its fifty-one community councils what their priorities are for the City Budget on a biennial basis. The City has teams of staff persons (Cincinnati Neighborhood Action Strategy-CNAS teams) to assist neighborhoods with this process. The City then considers these priorities in putting together its Operating, Capital and Consolidated Plan budgets.

#### Continuum of Care Process – Homeless Housing

Annually, the City of Cincinnati sponsors a professionally facilitated Continuum of Care process that includes the Hamilton County Community Development Department and the Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless. Participating are nonprofit providers of housing and services, state and local governments/agencies, private sector representatives, housing developers, foundations and other community organizations, as well as homeless or formerly homeless persons. The outcome of the process is an application for Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance funding in which the participants reached a consensus on the needs, gaps and relative priorities for grant funding.

#### Citizen Advisory Committees

In addition to neighborhood participation, the City's budget process has several citizen advisory groups that are involved in reviews of budget proposals for City funding.

*The Human Services Advisory Committee (HSAC):* HSAC advises the City on the allocation of funds for human services activities, both from the Community Development Block Grant and from a General Fund set-aside. In collaboration with the Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless, it also advises on the allocation of resources for emergency shelter and transitional housing provided by Community Development Block Grant and Emergency Shelter Grant funds. The HSAC makes its recommendations to the City Manager and for Consolidated Plan program recommendations, to the Community Development Advisory Board (CDAB). Agencies with proposals for funding are asked to prepare applications in the spring of the year for review and recommendation by mid-summer.

*Housing Advisory Council (HAC):* Created in 2003 through an agreement between the City and Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority (CMHA), the primary focus of the HAC was to recommend and develop programs to address the rental needs of low-income families in Hamilton County, including the City of Cincinnati. Secondly, the HAC was charged with identification of methods and programs to increase market rate rental and homeownership opportunities in the City of Cincinnati.

*HOPWA Advisory Committee:* Since the City of Cincinnati became a HOPWA entitlement grantee in 1998, the City has utilized an ad hoc advisory committee comprised of representatives of the principal agencies serving persons with HIV/AIDS, and advocacy groups, within the twelve-county eligible metropolitan statistical area (EMSA). The HOPWA Advisory Committee makes recommendations to the CDAB.

*Fair Housing Committee:* The Fair Housing Committee is currently being restructured to focus on predatory lending and other fair housing issues. It is comprised of members representing various community organizations, not for profit housing developers, realtors, bankers, city and county administrators, civil rights organizations, religious associations, and higher education professionals. The committee meets to discuss identified impediments to fair housing within Hamilton County, to review existing City, County, State and Federal housing policies and programs, and to make recommendations for new policies in pursuit of fair housing. An update to the City's Impediments to Fair Housing Study is anticipated during 2004.

*Cincinnati Neighborhood Business Districts United (CNBDU):* Proposals for funding for neighborhood business district (NBD) improvements are made through a special process of the neighborhood development division of the Department of Community Development and Planning (DCDP). Request-For-Proposal packages are mailed to community leaders in early March. Information may be obtained from DCDP by calling 352-6254. The deadline for submission is June 1. NBD proposals are reviewed by CNBDU, an association of NBD members. Their recommendations are made to DCDP, which in turn requests funding from CDBG or City Capital resources.

*Community Development Advisory Board (CDAB):* All proposed expenditures in each annual Consolidated Plan budget are reviewed by the Community Development Advisory Board, a volunteer citizen's group appointed by the Mayor and advisory to the City Manager. Its members include neighborhood representatives, lenders, developers, representatives of neighborhood business and other community organizations.

#### Consolidated Plan Amendments

A substantial amendment to the Consolidated Plan Budget requires the review of the Community Development Advisory Board, public notice in the City Bulletin and a newspaper of general circulation with a 30-day opportunity to comment, and a public hearing before the City Council. The City will consider all comments from citizens prior to the submission of the substantial amendment, and will explain reasons for accepting or not accepting such comments as part of its amendment process.

A substantial amendment is defined to include the following situations:

- Major budget adjustments (20% or more change of total budget in any grant fund) related to final resources;
- Reallocation of program dollars exceeding \$3,000,000, except for the annual sunset process;
- A proposed change in the allocation or selection criteria for generic programs such as loan programs or competitive development programs; and
- Proposed uses of HUD 108 Loan Authority or CDBG Float loans.

The CDAB will make recommendations on program changes from the 2005-2006 Approved Budget and will participate in an examination of the City's citizen participation process in the preparation of the next five-year Consolidated Plan.

A public hearing before the City Council will be held annually during the first quarter of the year to consider the amendment to the Consolidated Plan related to the allocation of final resources.

In addition, a public hearing will be held at any other time during the year concerning any substantial amendment to the Consolidated Plan. A notice of the public hearing will appear in a newspaper of

general circulation and in the City Bulletin at least 15 days before the hearing. In addition, community organizations will be sent notices by mail. The public hearing will be held in City Hall, which is an accessible facility. Other accommodations for sight or hearing-impaired persons and for non-English speaking persons will be made upon request.

### Performance Reviews

Citizens are encouraged to comment on the performance of city and nonprofit agencies in implementing Consolidated Plan programs and projects and in meeting program objectives.

While the Consolidated Plan documents the proposed use of funds, the Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER) identifies the progress and performance of projects, programs and services funded during the prior program year. The CAPER is available in early March annually. At the beginning of March, the Office of Budget and Evaluation will publish a notice in the City Bulletin and in a general publication newspaper that the performance reports are available and locations where they may be reviewed. Citizens may request copies by calling the Office of Budget and Evaluation 352-3232. Comments by citizens on the City's performance will be considered by the City and included in the submission of the Performance Report to HUD.

### Access to Records

Citizens may have reasonable and timely access to information and records relating to Cincinnati's Consolidated Plan and its use of funds for the preceding five years. Consolidated Plan program history, in the form of previous Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) reports, CDBG Consolidated Plans, and CDBG Grantee Performance Reports can be reviewed in the Office of Budget and Evaluation, Rm. 142, City Hall, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., or by calling 352-3232. The Consolidated Plan will be available in PDF format on the City's web site - [www.cincinnati-oh.gov](http://www.cincinnati-oh.gov). Printed copies are available for review in Room 142 of City Hall and in the Public Library of Hamilton County.

### Technical Assistance

Community groups may receive assistance with proposals for potential Consolidated Plan program funding through the following resources. All requests that fall outside of the human services or neighborhood business district funding process should be submitted no later than May 15 annually in order to be considered in department funding requests.

#### *City Departments and Staff*

#### **Department of Community Development and Planning:**

Housing, Human Services, Economic Development, and Workforce Development questions:  
Acting Director, Oren J. Henry, 352-6146

Employment & Training Division  
Annette Armstrong, 352-4982

#### **Department of Finance, Budget and Evaluation Division**

Gerry Torres, 352-6272  
John Dietz, 352-1563

#### **Cincinnati Development Fund**

Pre-development grants for non-profits:  
Jeanne Golliher, 721-7211

### Complaints

Complaints from citizens concerning Consolidated Plan activities, amendments or performance should be directed to the Community Development Administrator in the Office of Budget and Evaluation, Room 142, City Hall. Citizen complaints submitted in writing will be answered within 15 working days where practicable.

## **Monitoring**

### Current Monitoring Procedures

Citizens are encouraged to comment on the performance of city and nonprofit agencies in implementing Consolidated Plan programs and projects and in meeting program objectives.

While the Consolidated Plan documents the proposed use of funds, the Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER) identifies the progress and performance of projects, programs and services funded during the prior program year. Annual reports for the HOME Program are also available. The CAPER is available in early April annually. In March, the Budget and Evaluation Division will publish a notice in the City Bulletin and in a general publication newspaper specifying when the performance reports will be available and locations where they may be reviewed.

Citizens may have reasonable and timely access to information and records relating to Cincinnati's Consolidated Plan and its use of funds for the preceding five years. Consolidated Plan program history, in the form of previous Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) reports, CDBG Consolidated Plans, and CAPERs can be reviewed in the Budget and Evaluation Division, Rm. 142, City Hall, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., or by calling 352-3232.

Complaints from citizens concerning Consolidated Plan activities, amendments or performance should be directed to the Community Development Administrator in the Budget and Evaluation Division, Room 142, City Hall. Citizen complaints submitted in writing will be answered within 15 working days where practicable.

### Administrative Monitoring

The Budget and Evaluation Division of the Finance Department administers the City's Consolidated Plan grants. Administration includes the following functions:

- Reviewing all proposals for funding at the budget phase for eligibility with grant program requirements.
- Reviewing grant budgets in their entirety for compliance with program caps (CDBG) and program set-asides (HOME CHDO requirements).
- Reviewing all activities at the implementation phase for compliance with grant requirements (with Law Department).
- Monitoring activities to ensure commitment of funds in a timely manner, in particular the Emergency Shelter Grants and CHDO commitments for HOME funds.
- Monitoring ongoing expenditures during the course of the program year to ensure program caps are not exceeded and that the CDBG program as a whole is in compliance with national benefit standards.
- Monitoring achievement of plan goals and objectives through periodic and annual reports and through the budget review process with citizen advisory board.

### Subrecipient Monitoring

- The City has formal subrecipient monitoring procedures that involve the following elements:
- An audit requirement based on a risk assessment (for subrecipients of less than \$300,000 in federal funds).
- City staff is assigned to monitor subrecipient contracts.
- Written monthly activity reports are required.



- Documentation for all vouchers is required.
- Frequent communication with subrecipient, including telephone contacts, routine site visits, with file reviews at least annually and a formal site visit with complete compliance reviews once every 24 months.

#### Technical Assistance

Community groups may receive assistance with proposals for potential Consolidated Plan program funding through the following resources. All requests that fall outside of the human services or neighborhood business district funding process should be submitted no later than May 15 annually in order to be considered in department funding requests.

#### ***Department of Community Development and Planning***

Oren J. Henry, Acting Director – 352-6264

#### ***General Eligibility Questions***

Gerry Torres, 352-6272

John Dietz, 352-1563

### **Resource Projections**

Consolidated Plan Budget resources are comprised of the grant amounts, CDBG program income, and reallocated prior year funds (operating savings and project closeouts). The City of Cincinnati's Consolidated Plan budget for 2003 was \$28 million. The City estimates that 2004 resources will be approximately \$26.1 million, although Congress has not completed its appropriation process for 2004.

The City expects to continue to receive funding from various HUD discretionary programs that provide needed housing and other services, such as the Continuum of Care grants. Other resources expected to be available are discussed in the City's Consolidated Plan submission.

### **Plan to Minimize Displacement**

In carrying out its Consolidated Plan programs, the City of Cincinnati minimizes displacement of low-income families in the following manner:

The City's rehabilitation loan programs are structured to discourage permanent displacement. Any permanent relocation, or the temporary relocation of tenants that may be necessary during the rehabilitation process, is a cost to the property owner. This increases the owner's incentive to avoid displacement and minimize any relocation during the rehabilitation process.

In addition to this rehabilitation policy, the City has two additional programs that minimize the effects of displacement. The Code Related Relocation Program provides relocation benefits to tenants who are forced to vacate their homes due to the enforcement of the City's local building or health codes. In addition, the program now provides relocation benefits for families with children with elevated blood lead levels. Benefits include moving expenses and rent payments, as well as assistance in locating safe and sanitary housing.

The second local program is for relocation assistance to residents and businesses displaced as a result of locally funded development activity in the downtown.

All relocation benefits provided as a result of activities assisted with Consolidated Plan funding are at levels required by the Uniform Act.

## **The Programs**

### **HOME Investment Partnerships Program**

The HOME Investment Partnerships Program is a formula grant that funds affordable housing programs. HOME funds can be used for acquisition, construction, reconstruction, and moderate or substantial rehabilitation activities that promote affordable rental and ownership housing. It can also be used for tenant-based rental assistance. Cincinnati uses HOME funds primarily for the rehabilitation of rental housing units for low-income families, and for homeowner rehabilitation and the promotion of new home ownership opportunities. Housing programs funded by HOME funds are described below under the Community Development Block Grant program descriptions. HOME funds are administered by the Department of Community Development and Planning. The 2004 federal HOME grant is \$ 4,428,285.

### **Housing for People With AIDS (HOPWA)**

HOPWA funds may be used to assist all forms of housing designed to prevent homelessness of AIDS victims including emergency housing, shared housing arrangements, apartments, single room occupancy dwellings, and community residences. HOPWA funds also may be used to fund services, such as health care and mental health services, drug and alcohol abuse treatment and counseling, intensive care, case management, assistance with daily living and other supportive services. Cincinnati's 2004 HOPWA grant amount is \$550,000. Cincinnati became a HOPWA grantee for the first time in 1998. The Department of Community Development and Planning administers the grant.

### **Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG)**

The Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) Program is a formula grant that can fund both the capital and non-staff operating needs of emergency shelters and transitional housing for the homeless. Outreach or supportive services for the homeless are also allowable uses of funds. Cincinnati's 2004 ESG grant amount was \$596,391. ESG funds are administered by the Department of Community Development and Planning.

### **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)**

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) is a formula grant from the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to local and state governments. The primary objectives of the CDBG program are to benefit low- and moderate-income people or aid in the prevention or elimination of slums and blight. CDBG funds are a flexible resource that can be used for a wide range of programs or projects within a broad framework of eligible activities. Overall, 70% of CDBG expenditures must benefit low- and moderate-income persons.

Cincinnati's 2004 CDBG budget totaled \$19,765,180, with \$16,103,000 of that amount coming from new grant funds and the balance from program income and prior year funds. Multiple City departments as well as community nonprofit agencies utilize CDBG funds to carry out program objectives.

CDBG can be used to fund a wide variety of activities including:

- Rehabilitation of residential housing, both rental and owner-occupied properties;
- Rehabilitation or new construction of public facilities and improvements, including but not limited to streets and other infrastructure, parks, recreation facilities, community or health centers, facilities delivering human services operated by private non-profit agencies, and shelters serving the homeless or other special needs populations;

- Acquisition, disposition, or demolition of properties for a CDBG-eligible activity;
- Public services that are new or provide an increased level of service over that which has been provided by the local government in the preceding 12 months. All public services in the CDBG program in any given year may not exceed 15% of the total entitlement grant amount;
- Relocation payments when required pursuant to CDBG regulations or as determined appropriate by the grantee;
- Special economic development activities including the acquisition, construction or rehabilitation of commercial or industrial property when carried out by the recipient or by public or private nonprofit organizations;
- Assistance to private for-profit businesses including grants, loans, loan guarantees, and technical assistance. The assistance must meet certain underwriting and public benefit standards.

CDBG funds cannot be used for a number of specific activities including:

- Buildings used for general government purposes;
- Equipment;
- Operation, maintenance and staffing of normal community services and facilities not specifically related to other Block Grant-funded projects; and
- Regular government expenditures.

#### Community Development Block Grant Local Program Focus

The priorities for Cincinnati's CDBG funds set by the City Council over a number of years are:

- Housing
- Economic and Job Development
- Human Services Facilities

#### Housing

A primary objective for the use of CDBG funds by the City of Cincinnati is to serve its communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment to low- and moderate-income persons. A large amount of CDBG funds are spent on providing or improving permanent residential structures through the City's Department of Community Development and Planning (DCDP). DCDP provides a variety of services to both very low and low-income homeowners and renters. In past years, most of these programs have been made available to eligible clients on a citywide basis rather than focusing on certain neighborhoods. The following is a summary of funded housing programs.

Programs for Homeowners include:

*Housing Maintenance Services:* Home repair and emergency repair services are provided primarily for very low-income elderly, disabled and single parent homeowners.

*Deferred Rehabilitation Loans and Lead Abatement Grants:* Provides deferred rehabilitation loans for one- to two-unit owner occupied buildings citywide to make code related repairs, improve accessibility, and enhance energy conservation. This program is currently implemented by the Homeownership Center.



*Neighborhood Revitalization:* Provides funds to implement strategies to increase home ownership through focused revitalization in specific neighborhoods.

*Housing Development Programs:* Assistance may be in the form of infrastructure improvements or loans and grants to developers to upgrade existing housing and create new single unit and multi-unit housing for buyers and renters. This program is also funded with HOME Investment Partnerships dollars.

*Down Payment Assistance:* Funds for down payment and closing costs to first time homebuyers who are below 80% of median area income. The program is currently administered through the Shuttlesworth Foundation.

Programs for Renters include:

*Rental Rehabilitation:* Provides for the rehabilitation and development of affordable rental housing units. Rental Rehab provides funding for units requiring moderate rehabilitation, using HOME funds.

*Fair Housing Services:* The City currently contracts with Housing Opportunities Made Equal to promote equal housing opportunities for persons seeking housing regardless of race, sex, color, nationality, religion, handicap or familial status.

*Tenant Representation:* The City currently contracts with the Legal Aid Society to provide assistance to clients with legal problems related to tenant/landlord relations, code related issues and tenants' rights.

Additionally:

*Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG):* Funds are used to support the operations of homeless shelters, to provide outreach or supportive services to the homeless, or to rehabilitate homeless facilities. Agencies are required to match ESG funds.

For further information about Cincinnati's housing programs contact:

Department of Community Development and Planning, Two Centennial Plaza, Suite 700, 805 Central Avenue, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202 or telephone: (513) 352-6146.

### Economic Development

CDBG funds provide loans, grants, public improvements and technical assistance to businesses and industries to expand or consolidate their operations within Cincinnati, providing jobs for low and moderate income persons or goods and services for low and moderate income neighborhoods. CDBG funds are also used for job training and referral services.

The City of Cincinnati's economic development programs are delivered primarily by the Department of Community Development and Planning. Programs include:

*Neighborhood Business District Program:* DCDP aims to increase economic vitality by increasing sales revenues of individual businesses, creating and retaining jobs in neighborhoods and improving the physical environment through the funding of lead abatement, facade, streetscape and other public improvements in the neighborhood business districts.

*Small Business Loan Program:* Provides loans for growing small businesses where additional financing is needed for expansion, providing additional jobs and commercial services for Cincinnati neighborhoods.

*Technical Assistance and Micro-Loans:* Through a contract with the Cincinnati Business Incubator (CBI), and Greater Cincinnati Micro Initiative (GCMI) the City funds technical assistance, micro-loans, and incubator facilities and support for minority and women owned businesses.

*Strategic Program for Urban Redevelopment (SPUR):* Assists businesses with loans or grants for property acquisition or site improvements at vacant, contaminated or underutilized sites in order to return these properties to productive use, increase the tax base, protect public health, and expand and promote job creation and retention for low- and moderate-income persons of the city.

*Workforce Development:* Administers various programs that provide employment opportunities to low and moderate income residents of the City. The City contracts with community workforce development programs to teach life skills, provide employment readiness training, and offer job placement services for adults and youth. The City funds subsidized employment for youth and young adults through two contract agencies: Citizens' Committee on Youth (CCY) and Cincinnati Youth Collaborative (CYC).

For more information about the City's economic development activities please contact the Department of Community Development and Planning, Two Centennial Plaza, Suite 700, 805 Central Avenue, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202 or telephone (513) 352-6146.

#### Human Services

CDBG funds are used for Human Services Division (HSD) administered City grants. Community agencies use City grants to make renovations and improvements to public facilities or buildings where human services are provided to City residents. Human service facility projects address correction of code violations, assist in the removal of architectural barriers that restrict mobility and accessibility, focus on energy conservation or historic preservation, and increase an agency's capacity to provide needed programs or services. A small portion of HSD CDBG funds can be used to provide agency operating support. However, the amount available for operating grants is very limited due to the City cap for CDBG operating support.

For more information about HSD administered City grant programs please contact the Department of Community Development and Planning, Two Centennial Plaza, Suite 700, 805 Central Avenue, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202, or telephone (513) 352-6146.

#### Planning and Administration

CDBG funds are used for planning activities and general administration of the CDBG and HOME Programs. Planning and Urban Renewal studies, feasibility studies and design studies related to economic development are examples of planning activities conducted with CDBG funds. The Department of Community Development and Planning also conducts environmental and historic design reviews.

General administration includes coordination of budget and federal reporting requirements and compliance with federal program mandates.